

DISCOURSE

CONTAINING

THE FIRST JUDGMENT



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LONDON:

PRINTED BY G. ALLEN, 10, ABINGDON STREET, S.W.

[1863-1864]

REVELATION xx. 12.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged out of those things, which were written in the Books, according to their Works.

WE commonly and truly say of God's people, that when they are most alone, they are least alone; when they are alone in one sense, they are not in another, for the Father is with them; and that God that is with them at all times, is most sweetly with them in the worst of times: when the child is sick, then it is most dandled on the knee; then the closet is ransack'd for the choice cordial: many eminent instances of this we have in scripture; but perhaps not any more eminent than this of the apostle, and who is generally believed to be the Evangelist St. John; who being for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus, banished into the isle of *Patmos*, God made *Patmos* a paradise to him; there it was, he had most sweet intercourse with God; rare and useful discoveries from God, that perhaps he ever experienced; discoveries did I say; yea, not only what should be hereafter in time, but also at the end of time, the most lively re-

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presentation of the resurrection, judgment, and final determination of all things: my text and context give an account of the visionary representation the apostle John had of the general judgment; in the foregoing verse, he tells us of a throne erected; spacious and glorious, a great and a white throne; and such was the majesty of him that sat on it, that heaven and earth could not endure his presence; a throne being erected, the next account we have is of the persons convinced, and the judicial procedure, and that is in the words of the text; *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.*

So that these words contain an account of the general judgment; a large account in a few words. In handling of which, for method's sake, we shall take notice of these *three* general parts, **FIRST**, The person judging who is God: **SECONDLY**, The persons judged, *the dead, small and great, standing before God*: **THIRDLY**, The form of procedure, and that is, the opening of the books, and judging the dead out of those things written in the books, according to their works.

First, The judge himself, and he is said to be God; by whom is meant principally the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-man and Mediator of the New Covenant; the man that is God's fellow, equal with the Father, and
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thought it no robbery to be so ; who is properly, truly, and really God ; not God by office, as magistrates are, but God by nature : I must confess, the work of judging, as well as of making and ruling the world, belongs to all the persons in the Trinity ; as all had a hand in making and governing the world, so they will in judging the world ; but though the power of judging, approving, and rewarding in the great day, is proper to all the three persons ; yet the outward sitting on the Tribunal, and the publication of the sentence are peculiar to Christ ; and this work and business Christ is FIRST called to, SECONDLY, Qualified for it.

1st, He is called to it, the Father hath authorized him, as in *John* v. 27. and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of God ; the Father hath made a commitment of this work to the Son, as in the 22^d verse. *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son ; the Father hath ordained, constituted, and appointed Christ to this work, so in Acts xvii. 31. because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead ;* God hath ordained Christ to this work in a way of justice to himself, and in a way of kindness to us.

2^{dly}, He is every way qualified for this work ; there are three qualifications that are

absolutely necessary for a judge ; power, wisdom, and justice ; and all these are eminently found in Christ.

1. Power ; power to reach the living ; power to raise the dead, and to bring them before him, and to pass sentence on them ; saith our Lord, *all power in heaven and earth is given unto me.* The person who in the words of our text is called God, is else where called the mighty God, the great God : so saith the apostle, *looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* It is true, our Lord, at that day, will make use of the ministring angels ; but it will not be, because he cannot act without them ; but to put a greater honour upon it ; it will not be out of necessity but for majesty, that he makes use of them.

2. Another qualification that is necessary for a judge is wisdom ; a judge ought to be a discerning person, a person of deep penetration ; our dear Lord is said to be the wisdom of the Father ; he is called a Counsellor, a wonderful counsellor ; he is called not only the power of God, but the wisdom of God ; see how he is described in Revelation i. 14. *his head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire ;* he is no novice, for his hairs are woolly with eternity ; and his eyes flame with omniscience ; as his power was never yet opposed, so his wisdom was never yet puzzled ; it is true, earthly judges ask that they may know, they take their information from witnesses ;
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but Christ need not that any should testify of man; for he knows what is in man: *Lord, saith Peter, thou knowest all things*, John xx. 17.

3. Another qualification that is necessary for a judge is justice: a judge should be a person that should determine things after an unbyassed manner; and shall *not the judge of all the earth do right?* He is not under any temptation to injustice, either by applause or interest: the apostle *Paul* writing his farewell letter to his beloved *Timothy*; when he was ready to be made a sacrifice for the cause of Christ, says he, in 2 Tim. iv. 6. *for I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness; where the apostle compares the glory of that day to a crown, in respect to the splendor of it; in respect to the weight of it; and in respect to the perpetuity of it, for a crown hath no end: but then, saith he, this crown is a crown of righteousness; why so? Because it is given by a righteous judge, to righteous persons, in a righteous manner; a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day: God will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath appointed: I might add a fourth quality that is necessary for a judge; and that is visibility; and this is peculiar to Christ; of all the persons in the glorious Trinity, this of visibility is most proper to him: with respect to the spirit, I do not remember he assumed any visible form, but twice, the one was in the form of a*
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dove at the baptism of Christ; the other was the form of cloven tongues on the apostles; and with respect to God the Father, I do not remember, we read he ever assumed any visible form; as for the appearances that *Abraham, Jacob and Moses*, and others had; we have the greatest ground to believe, it was the Son of God; when the law was given, a voice was heard, but no similitude seen; when Christ was baptized, a voice was heard, but no similitude seen; so likewise when Christ was transfigured; and to this agrees that expression of our Lord, John i. 18. *no man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the father, he hath declared him*; but now with respect to Christ, as he was visible on earth, so he is in heaven to those that are there; and he will appear visible at the end of the world: the Lord Christ shall be *revealed* from heaven; it is not said, he shall come visible, but he shall be *revealed*, and our Lord tells us, Matthew xxiv. 30. *and then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*; so you have that expression of the angels to the apostles in Acts i. 11. *which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*. In like manner, how is that? they saw him go in the clouds, in like manner he shall come in the clouds;
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they saw him go with angels, in like manner he shall come with angels; they saw him go with a proper soul and body, in like manner he shall so come again; they saw him go into heaven visibly, in like manner he shall come visibly; very express are those words, Revelation i. 7. *Behold he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him*; now least we should be tempted to think every believing eye shall see him, every one that is united to him, and none but such, the next words clear it; and *they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*; but perhaps you will be ready to say, how does this agree with the expression, *follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord!* the meaning is, no man shall see him, so as to enjoy him comfortably; they shall see him, every eye shall see him; but none shall comfortably see him without holiness; there will be a great difference between seeing of Christ at the last day; it's a comfortable thing to near relations to see a judge on the bench, because of the honour that is conferred on him; when on the other hand, it is a terror to a malefactor that is to be judged by him: we will draw an inference or two from this first head, and so proceed.

Is Christ invested with the power of judging the quick and the dead? Is he called to it, and qualified for it? Then hence we may infer the divinity of Christ, he is here stiled God; but if that term was wanting, the office would teach it: who but God can raise the dead;

dead; he that knows the secrets of all hearts, he must needs be God; you know that expression, Rom. xiv. 12. *so then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God.* Who is this God! See the 10th verse, *For why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? We shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ:* I have often thought of that expression in Psalm lviii. 11. says the prophet there, *verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth;* he does not say verily he is a God that will judge in the earth, though that is true; the works of creation and providence are ascribed to Christ, *by him all things were made, and by him all things consist;* but that is not what I aim at, if he that judgeth in the earth is God, then certainly he is God that judgeth in heaven.

If this be so, that Christ is invested with the office of a judge, it lets us see what little cause we have to be ashamed of the Cross; this may support us under all temptations that may arise from the sense of our Lord's meanness in this world: this was a sore temptation to many, the birth of Christ, the life of Christ, the followers of Christ, and especially the death of Christ, was a great stumbling to many; and the *Jews* and *Mahometans* to this day upbraid us with believing in a crucified God; but let the sense of the Crown take away the scandal of the Cross; when we consider him in his low estate, let us consider him in his advanced estate; this was a shock to the disciples themselves; in Luke xxiv. 13.

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you have an account how two of them were going to *Emmaus* very sorrowful, and talked together of all those things which had happened; and while they were communing together, Jesus drew nigh, and went with them; but they knew him not; and he said unto them, *What manner of communications are these, that ye have one to another as ye walk, and are sad;* and one of them, whose name was *Cleophas*, said to him, *Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that are come to pass in these days:* and he said unto them, *What things?* and they said unto him concerning *Jesus of Nazareth*, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him; but we trusted it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. They knew Christ was betrayed, that he was apprehended, that he was accused, arraigned and condemned, and crucified; and this was a sore trial to them. well, says Christ, *Oh fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?* As if he should say, you should put the glory of Christ with his sufferings; what if Christ die a death of pain and of ignominy? What if he went hungry and thirsty about the world? Consider his exalted estate, he is qualified for this state; this was a support to our Lord himself, when

he was brought before the high priest, *Mark* xiv. 61. he asked him, *Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed?* Though our Lord knew a positive answer would cost him his life, yet he answers, and said, *I am:* and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right-hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. When we look upon the ruddiness of Christ, we should look upon the whiteness of Christ; though he is red through his passion and sufferings, yet he is white in respect to his purity, innocence, and glory: what if our Lord did drink of the brook by the way? What if he did humble himself to die the death of the cross? What if he was made a little lower than the angels? Yet he hath lift up his head, and God hath highly exalted him; so I have done with the first thing, the person judging, and that is God.

Secondly, The next thing proposed to be spoken to, is the persons judged; and they are here said to be the *dead, small and great:* by *dead* here we are not to understand persons at that time literally dead; but such that had been really dead, but were then quickned and raised: nor are we to understand it of those that had been dead, and none but them; but also of those that were found alive, to whom the change should be instead of death; for if Christ had power to raise the dead, we need not question the power of Christ, to change those that were then living: now the dead, small and great, here mentioned, may be considered in a double sense.

1st, By their different order in this life, *small and great*.

2^{dly}, By the sameness of posture in the other life, *standing before God*.

1st, By their different order in this life, *small and great*: these terms may be considered more generally, and so signify that every individual person shall be brought before God in the day of judgment; not one shall be exempted, not one shall be excused; every son and daughter of *Adam* must then appear; not one will be missing at that day; we use to say there is no general rule but there is some exception, but here is a general order without any exception: we may also take the words more particularly, *small and great*, that is,

1. Persons of all sizes and ages.

2. Persons of all ranks and qualities.

1. Of all sizes and ages, young and old, little and great, from the shortest lived infant, to the longest lived Methuselah; it will not be the greenness of years, nor the greyness of hairs that will excuse them: here I would not be misunderstood, as though I supposed, this text doth countenance that opinion of those, that say at the general resurrection, persons shall rise in the same stature they died in. No, *I saw the dead, small and great*, that is, such as had been small, and such as had been great, as here: I am rather apt to think, that persons shall appear in the same goodliness of stature as *Adam* was creat-

ed in, and as our dear Redeemer died in, who was about thirty-three years of age; and this we know, the same body he died in, the same he was buried in, the same body he rose in, and with the same body he will come to judge the world in; and we are told, the bodies of the saints shall be made like unto his glorious body, not only for splendor, but I am apt to think also for stature.

2. Small and great, that is, persons of all ranks and qualities, rich and poor, high and low, noble and ignoble, those that God hath made the head, and those that are the tail; not one will be exempted; the highest and the greatest of the world's grandees, and the poorest and meanest vassals, will not be excused; the poorest *Lazaruses* that are, that sit on the dung-hill, that have nothing but rags to clothe them, or crumbs to feed them, shall not be overlooked, though they are here made the scorn and derision of their fellow-creatures; yet they shall have a fair and full hearing: so neither will greatness excuse; in that day the busy man must not say he cannot come; nor the great man he will not; no, persons of all ranks must then appear and stand before God; it will not serve turn to appear by proxy, by sending another in their stead; no, but they must appear in person.

2dly, They are here described by the sameness of posture as they shall be in another life; and that is, a standing posture,
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and the same is among them all: the *Alexanders* and *Cæsars* that made the world tremble, shall then stand before God: but let us consider the posture itself; they are said to stand before God: I find in scripture, the saints at the judgment are said to sit; our Lord speaking to his followers, tells them, Luke xxii. 29. *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel;* but perhaps you will say, this honour and privilege may be peculiar only to the apostles; that is not so, for our Lord says, *Many shall come from the east, and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;* but however, our Lord is more express for this in Rev. iii. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne:* he, let it be who he will, apostle or disciple, minister or other believer, if he be a victorious believer, he shall sit with Christ; hence the throne is said not only to be a throne, but a large throne: these several things, a sitting posture imports,

1st, Rest after labour. The angels are never said to sit, for they are never toiled and fatigued; they have no temptations to resist, no corruptions to overcome.

2^{dly}, Sitting denotes contentment and satisfaction.

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3dly, It intimates a nearness of relation ; the wife and children sit when the servants stand.

4thly, It denotes safety, such are not liable to fall ; the throne must fall if they fall : but sinners are said to stand in the judgment ; they all stand before God ; which makes me believe this principally refers to the latter part of the judgment ; *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God* ; but perhaps you will say, is it not said, *Sinners shall not stand in the judgment*, as in Psalm i. 5. *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment* : standing there signifies prevailing ; sinners shall not prevail in the judgment ; now this standing principally implies these three things :

1st, Distance, estrangedness ; as I said before, near relations sit, whilst their servants and strangers stand ; sinners in that day shall find themselves in the same state of estrangedness to God, as they were in this world : as they were never united to Christ, it shall be the same with them at that day, and to all eternity.

2dly, A standing posture is a waiting posture, an expecting and looking for something ; sinners in that day will be looking for something, but for what ? The apostle tells us, *A fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation of the wrath of God*.

3dly, it denotes a readiness to depart. We use to say, when persons are standing they are going ; sinners will be in expectation of departing ;

parting ; the angels will come to bind up the tares in bundles, and cast them into everlasting burning ; so much for the SECOND thing, the persons judged, which are described by small and great, standing before God ; we will draw an inference or two from this *Second* head, and so proceed :

1st, From the terms, small and great, standing before God, we may hence infer, what little reason the saints have anxiously to desire worldly greatness, or envy prosperous wickedness ; these things will not exempt them from, or help them in the day of judgment ; men of the greatest places, and of greatest figure in the world, will not be esteemed for that, then their cry will not be, who will enrich us ? Who will advance us ? No, riches profit nothing in the day of wrath ; they will not profit in the day of mens wrath ; for they will not keep the godly from plundering ; neither will they profit in the day of God's wrath, for they will not keep the wicked from damning : neither should we envy the prosperity of the wicked ; if the wicked spread themselves like a green bay-tree ; tho' their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish ; yet do not envy them their short happiness ; these things will not help them in the day of judgment, nor exempt them from it, as I said before.

2^{dly}, From the posture of standing before God, let sinners consider their duty ; as ever you would not stand hopeless, helpless, and speechless

less at the bar of Christ hereafter ; let not Christ stand at the door of your hearts slighted now ; you know the expression in Rev. iii. 20. *Behold I stand at the door and knock* ; there is matter of attention, and a note of attention : the matter is to see Christ stand at the door of a sinner's heart ; behold it with a believing eye, that Christ stands there ; and with an eye of thankfulness, that he waits there ; what's the meaning of it ? Why, he knocks some times by his providences, some times by prosperous, and some times by adverse providences ; he knocks some times by afflictions, and some times by sermons ; and these knocks are repeated over and over again ; we have line upon line, and precept upon precept ; but then observe the posture of Christ, standing there, waiting to see the issue and event, putting up many an unkind denial. It may be the wonder of saints to eternity, to see Christ stand at the sinner's heart ; it is unfit for him to do so, but it is very unfit to cause him to do so ; but most of all to occasion him to do it in vain ; as I observed before, a standing posture is but one degree between that and a moving posture ; and a sinner should consider this, Christ will not always stay ; and then woe to that soul whom Christ is departed from. I come now,

3^{dly}, To the last thing proposed to be spoken to, the form and method of the procedure in the day of judgment ; and that is, the opening of the books and judging of the dead, out of those

those things that were written in the books according to their works: these words are an allusion to those in the prophet, Dan. xii. 1. *and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book,* but more particularly to Dan. vii. 9, 10. *I beheld till the thrones were cast down; and the antient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like a fiery flame, and his wheels like burning fire; a fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministred unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened: in both these places it is an allusion to the manner of humane courts of judicature; for when there are any records, or matters that are committed to writing, they are produced, the Law-books and Statute-books are brought forth to see, what is law and what is not: but here let us consider what we are to understand by those books; they are commonly thought to be these four: the Book of God's Omniscience, the Book of the Sinner's Conscience, the Book of the Holy Scriptures, and lastly, the Book of Life.*

1st, There is the book of God's omniscience, which is called the Book of his Remembrance, as in Mal. iii. 16. *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written before him;* Not that we should imagine, that the eternal

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mind stands in need of a book to take account of the actions of his creatures : No, but it is recorded there as safe, as if it were written in a book ; all the sinful thoughts, idle discourses, and sinful actions of men are recorded there ; and God himself will be a swift witness against them.

2dly, There is the book of conscience. Conscience will not only execute the office of a judge and witness, but of a secretary ; it registers and writes down every thing, and therefore it is called Conscience, from *con* and *scire* a knowing together with God ; and this book will also be opened.

3dly, There is the book of the Holy Scriptures. In the Holy Scriptures we read of a three-fold law, the Law of Nature, the Law of *Moses*, and the Gospel, or Law of Faith. now the Heathens will be judged by the law of nature, as in Rom. ii. 12. There is the law of *Moses*, and that the *Jews* shall be judged by ; says our Lord, *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father, there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom you trust* : but then Christians shall be judged by the Gospel, Rom. ii. 16. *In that day, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel* ; and now, wo to us, if we fall under condemnation. Christians, they have not only the law of nature, and the law of *Moses*, but the gospel of Christ ; and wo to them if they miscarry : to have the promises, the prophecies, and precepts of the gospel produced
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and alledged against the sinner ; as if Christ should say, did not I promise, if thou would'st ask, it should be given thee ? Did not I promise, if thou would'st seek, thou should'st find ? Did not I promise, if thou would'st knock, it should be opened to thee ? Did I not command thee to believe in me ? Did not I invite thee to come to me for life ? And to that end, did I not send my ambassadors to beseech you, that you would be reconciled to God ? Did I not send my servants to bid you to the Supper ? Did I not tell you, that all things were ready, that my Spirit was ready, that I and my Father were ready, that Grace and Glory were ready, and are you not ready ? But then in the text, here is another book that shall be opened, which is here called the Book of Life : two things are requisite to be spoken to.

1st, What we are to understand by this book of life.

2^{dly}, Why it is so called, from the rest of the books. The ablest divines agree, by this book of life is meant the eternal immutable decree of God ; wherein, as in a book the Names of the Elect are written ; this is frequently called in scripture by several terms, Dan. xii. 1. It is barely called a *Book* ; sometimes it is expressed by having our Names written in *Heaven* : so our Lord said to his followers, Luke, x. 20. *Rejoice because your names are written in Heaven* ; sometimes it is called the *Lamb's Book of Life*, Rev. xiii. 8. and *all that dwell on*

earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb; but most frequently it is called The Book of Life, Phil. iv. 3. whose names are in the Book of Life, Rev. xxii. 19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophesy, God shall take away his Part out of the Book of Life: not that we must suppose there is any such thing as a material book, the expression is metaphorical; that is, that God's eternal Elect are all as fully known by him, as if their names were particularly recorded in a book.

2dly, Why it is called another book distinct from the rest; I humbly conceive, the difference lies in these three things, especially,

1st, Other books are common to all sorts of persons; but this is peculiar to the Elect only; the Book of God's Remembrance, the Book of Conscience, and the Book of Scripture, belong to one as well as to another; but this only to the Elect; and here are the fewest names in this book.

2dly, The other Books are made up of Judgment and Mercy, but this purely of Mercy and Grace: conscience accuses as well as excuses; the scripture sings of judgment as well as of mercy; but this Book of Life is made up only of Grace.

3dly, This differs with respect to the manifestation of it; other books are revealed in this life, but this is not: how far a person may know his name is written in the Book of Life, I shall not now determine; but in respect

spect to others, they cannot be certain, till the day of judgment: we may know it in respect of ourselves, God's spirit witnessing with ours that we are his children; we may with respect to others pass a judgment of charity, but not of certainty; but then the books will be opened, and it shall be known. From this head we may infer these two things;

1. The equity of judgment.

2. The accuracy of judgment.

1. How equitable it will be; Christ in that day will proceed no other way than according to the Statute-law; he will do righteous judgment; he will go according to the book. Persons here may be byassed, and judgment may be perverted; but in that day, none shall have cause to complain, every mouth shall be stopt, for every step shall be right.

2. We may consider the exactness of this judgment, when persons are minded to be exact in any thing they commit it to writing: all the swarms of idle thoughts, as well as of sinful words, are all registered; it shall not be the closeness of thy sins, nor the multiplicity of them, that shall hinder their coming to judgment, since they are all registered: farther it is said, the dead were *judged out of those things that were written in the books according to their works*; the meaning in short I take to be this, that the works of impenitent sinners, in the day of account, shall be compared with the law written in their natures, and
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with the law contained in the scriptures, and shall see how agreeable or disagreeable they have been to them, and so shall have their sentence ; as if Christ should say, Did not thy conscience tell thee thou oughtest not to do so and so ? Did not my word tell thee thou must own, honour, fear and trust in God ? Did not my word tell thee thou shouldest walk conscionably, equitably, soberly, that thou should walk humbly and self-denyingly in respect to thyself ? Now didst thou lay hold of eternal life ? Didst thou offer a holy violence against every thing that was contrary to my word ? Did not my word tell thee thou shouldst watch and be sober to the end ? That whatever thy hand findeth to do, thou shouldst do it with all thy might ? What sayst thou to all this ? But when we would interpret the words thus, we must take heed of two things ;

1st, Of bringing in the doctrine of merit, as if the righteous in that day shall by their works merit glory : No, mark it, the works of the wicked shall merit destruction, but life is the gift of God ; so saith the apostle, *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.*

2^{dly}, We must take care of shutting out faith. It is true, all shall be judged by their works ; but then mark it, there are works that flow from a principle of faith ; and there are works that flow from a principle of sin : now the wicked shall be judged without any respect

respect to that faith, the righteous have; without respect to that faith in Christ, which is the only thing that turns the scale to save them: *He that believes in the Son hath everlasting life*; it is certain the works of God's people shall be mentioned, and not the least work forgotten; not the least work of charity or piety, not a secret groan, not a pious instruction, or admonition, no, not a cup of cold water: water you know is that which is common and easy to be had; and a cup of water is no great quantity; and a cup of cold water that you have been at no pains in warming of it; this shall not be forgot. Whether the sins of God's people be then made manifest, I shall not determine; but if they are, it will not be to their shame or sorrow: but I am apt to think they will not, from the many expressions we have in scripture of God's pardoning the sins of his people: *I, even I, am he that blotteth out your iniquities*; and elsewhere, he is said to *cast them into the depths of the sea*, that they shall never be found to rise up in judgment against the people of God. Again, God is said to *cast them behind his back*; nay, it is said, *I will forgive their unrighteousness, and their sins I will remember no more*; but this is only by the way: when it is here said, the works of God's people shall be mentioned, and the people of God shall be judged by their works; we must not exclude the doctrine of faith; for if God's people were judged by their works,

works, without respect to their faith in Christ, then the most strict person in the world could not be able to answer God, one of a thousand; he could not stand, for the best of his performances are attended with sin and imperfection. From what has been delivered, we may say this much, if Christ is the judge, and small and great must stand before him; then say to the wicked, wo to the wicked, *it shall go ill with him*:

1. Wo to the stupidly ignorant, those that are wilfully ignorant; such shall perish for lack of knowledge; not knowing their Master's will, will not excuse such.

2. Wo to the atheistical scoffers in that day: such that say, my Lord delays his coming; the Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count; though they think God delays, yet their judgment delays not.

3. Wo to the jovial sinners in that day, that spend their days in pleasures; such that are taken up with the pleasures and vanities of the world; it is a sweet feast to such till that reckoning comes: such may walk in the sight of their eyes, and fulfil the desires of their hearts; but know for all these things, that God will bring them into judgment.

4. Wo to the covetous misers of this world, whose hearts are pinned to the earth; who make gold their God; who cry continually give, give; that sell their souls and
their

their Saviour for a little silver; the world, their god, shall be set on fire.

5. Wo also to bloody persecutors; such that are for murdering their brethren; such that are for staining the sword of authority with the blood of innocence; the souls under the altar are crying, how long, O Lord, ere thou avenge our blood; if such that would not relieve the people of God shall be damned, What will become of those that persecute and destroy them?

6. This day will be a woeful day to all hypocrites; then the hypocrites shall be uncast and unmasked; the fair glove will be pulled off the foul hand; fearfulness will surprize the hypocrite, and it will be a terrible time to them; but to conclude.

Say ye to the righteous it shall be well with them: Christ, who is their Friend, will be their Judge; the books will be opened, and a great day it will be, but it will be a good day to the people of God; it is the wicked that shall cry, *The great day of his wrath is come*; but it will be a day of redemption, a time of refreshing to the people of God; the trumpet of God will not sound death, but life to the believer; it will be a day of nuptials, of entering into rest; it will be a coronation-day; here the Saints rejoice, and they rejoice in believing, but then they will rejoice in beholding: it is true, the trumpet will be sounding, the tribes will be mourning,

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ing, the rocks will be renting, and the world will be wrapt up in flames; yet, *Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him: justice having taken satisfaction of the head, cannot come on the members for it.*

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